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**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 22, 23, and 24 are canceled. Claim 9 is amended to include the subject matter recited in each of previously presented claims 10, 11, and 12. Amended claim 9 is basically the same as previously presented claim 12 rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 21 is amended to include the subject matter recited in each of previously claims 22, 23, and 24. Amended claim 9 is basically the same as previously presented claim 12 rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claims 9, 21, 25, and 26 are pending.

Applicant would like to respectfully point out that the rejection of claims 9, 21, 25, and 26 is improper for the following reasons.

With regard to claim 9, Applicant would like to respectfully point out that claim 9 recites, inter alia, "for each logical tracer document item, encoding a physical blank document item with information associated with the particular logical tracer document item". Geisel et al. (referred to herein as "Geisel") does not disclose this element. The Examiner has not addressed this element of claim 9 in the Office Action. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner specifically point out where Geisel discloses or suggests this element recited in claim 9 of the present application. Absent an adequate explanation, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 9 is improper and, therefore, should be withdrawn.

With regard to claim 21, Applicant would like to respectfully point out that claim 9 recites, inter alia, "for each logical tracer document item, means for encoding a physical blank document item with information associated with the particular logical tracer document item". Geisel does not disclose this element. The Examiner has not addressed this element of claim 21 in the Office Action. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner specifically point out where Geisel discloses or suggests this element recited in claim 21 of

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the present application. Absent an adequate explanation, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 21 is improper and, therefore, should be withdrawn.

With regard to claim 25, Applicant would like to respectfully point out that claim 9 recites, inter alia, "assigning a unique entry number to all batches of document items received from the branch during a predetermined period of time" and "creating a group of logical tracer document items based upon the assigned unique entry number". Geisel does not disclose these elements. The Examiner has not addressed these elements of claim 25 in the Office Action. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner specifically point out where Geisel discloses or suggests these elements recited in claim 25 of the present application. Absent an adequate explanation, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 25 is improper and, therefore, should be withdrawn.

With regard to claim 26, Applicant would like to respectfully point out that claim 26 recites, inter alia, "means for assigning a unique entry number to all batches of document items received from the branch during a predetermined period of time" and "means for creating a group of logical tracer document items based upon the assigned unique entry number". Geisel does not disclose these elements. The Examiner has not addressed these elements of claim 26 in the Office Action. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner specifically point out where Geisel discloses or suggests these elements recited in claim 26 of the present application. Absent an adequate explanation, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 26 is improper and, therefore, should be withdrawn.

This amendment may be entered upon a showing of good reasons why it is necessary and was not presented earlier as per 37 C.F.R. §1.116. This amendment is necessary to overcome the rejections stated in the final Office Action. The amendment was not earlier presented because the Applicant did not know of the Examiner's position with respect to rejection of claims in the present application until receiving the final Office Action. Also, by way of the present amendment, certain rejected claims are canceled and certain claims are rewritten in independent form to better present claims for consideration on appeal.

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In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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